The Capitol Hill Monitor

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FEDERAL TRUNKING

by Willard Hardman

As many are aware, the federal government, including the military, have been moving to trunked radio systems in the 406.1 to 420.0 MHz band. There are already, and have been for a couple of years, trunked systems in operation in the Washington area. Federal trunked systems operate essentially the same in this band as do the commercial trunked systems in the 800 and 900 MHz range.

In theory, all new federal radio systems, including trunked, established are to have encryption capability. Almost all of the systems are Motorola SmartNet. Non-military systems employ the NTIA approved DES-XL. Military systems, including their contractors, use Fascinator for encryption. (As an aside, the NSA also had a hand in the approval. In broad and very much simplified terms, Fascinator is the military version of DES. The "noise" it makes sounds slightly different from DES. How it operates is clasified, but the effect is the same as DES.)

In August 1987, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) set aside four sets of frequencies in the UHF federal band for trunked radio systems. Each of the four sets consisted of five frequency pairs. The intent was to standardize the trunk systems throughout the federal government. However, practicalities led to this being a bit of "pie in the sky." This is particularly true in the Washington area. These sets have been repeatedly published in various hobby publications. However, they are of little practical use in the Washington area.

Groups were to be allocated in sets of five to any specific agency. The NTIA-agreed procedure was for group 1 to be used first, then group 2, etc. If a frequency was already in use in an area, an alternate pair from another group could be substituted. Because of the large number of radio nets that already existed in this band in the Washington area, NTIA and its minions ended up establishing unique nets with frequency pairs that bear little resemblance to the prescribed groups.

The largest and perhaps most heavily used trunked net was established by Department of the Army through the Military District of Washington (MDW). Instead of the five pairs prescribed by the NTIA, it has 10 pairs. Of those 20 frequencies, something less than 25 percent are from the four groups.

This trunked system has been discussed in earlier editions of the *Capitol Hill Monitor*. Users include the Army Criminal Investigation Command, including the Personal Security Activity, as well as the White House Communications Agency. Also included on the net are the Fort Belvoir Military Police, Fire Department, and Public Works. Davison Army Airfield operations are also on this net as is the MDW motor pool buses.

Health and Human Services and the Holocaust Museum also share a five-pair trunked system. (Note: It has recently been reported that for some unknown reason, the HHS radios on this system are using a CTCSS tone of 107.2 on the input frquencies. If you can verify this, or know why, let us know by phone or e-mail). Goddard Space Flight Center has its own five-pair trunked system, as well. As with the military system, only a few of these pairs come from the "approved" groupings. A little farther afield, Patuxent River Naval Air Station also has at least one trunked system.

Frequencies for the Washington area trunked systems that we know of are as follows:

ARMY SYSTEM

406.2000 (417.4250)
406.5250 (412.6500)
406.7750 (418.0000)
406.3000 (416.4000)
407.0250 (418.9250)
407.9500 (418.2750)
408.8500 (412.9500)
409.2500
411.2000 (419.5750)

Note: CID communications, and some WHCA communications, are regularly encrypted. The tenth channel was recently changed and is currently unknown.

GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER

407.0000 (412.0000)
408.1500 (412.2500)
408.6250 (415.4500)
409.5250 (416.7000)
410.2750 (417.2250)

HHS & HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

406.2500 (414.9250)
406.8500 (410.0250)
408.4500 (418.0250)
408.7000 (418.4250)
408.9000 (419.7750)

GOVERNMENT SOURCES OF INFO FOR SCANNER BUFFS

by Ken Fowler

There are many ways you can get scanner listening tips and frequency information. You can use FCC database listings, you can read books like Police Call, Scanner Master, or the Washington-Baltimore Scanner Almanac. I will suggest another way that you can become the professional scanner listener that you've always wanted to become. This article will give you some of the secret weapons that most experienced scanner buffs and authors use.

A successful and informed scanner listener is a student of the workings of local, state, and federal governments. They learn the essentials of how the agencies are organized, their functions, and how they interact with other agencies.

Here is a list of items that are available in most public libraries or from government agencies. In most cases this information is free for the asking. Some specific examples of what you can find and where you can get it will follow.

* Budget Documents (proposed and actual)
* Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)
* Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Budget Documents
* Annual Reviews of Service
* Annual Reports to City Councils and County Boards
* Technology Usage Reports
* Technology Design and Construction Documents
* Bid and Purchasing Documents
* Maps and Publications
* Pamphlets
* Various other state, county, city or local government publications

Now that you know what types of things to look for here are some specific examples of what you can find in the Metro Washington area. I did not, however, research in the District of Columbia public libraries. If you do, please share anything you may find.

In Fairfax County there are an almost infinite number of things scanner buffs can find to make the hobby of monitoring local governments more enjoyable. First there are the budget documents. In budget documents you can find plans for money being spent, description of services, and organizational charts. These are informative documents. All budget documents are available in one central location the Fairfax City Regional Library (Virginia Room) and in the Reston Regional Library for Fairfax County documents. The are located in public libraries or county seats/municipal buildings in other jurisdictions.

The next set of documents you might look at are the CIP, or Capital Improvement Documents. These contain information about future radio projects your government is planning and the type of money they are setting aside for it. For example, this is how I found out about the City of Fairfax buying laptop computers for a CAD/MDT system and the purchase of portable 800 MHz radios to join the Fairfax County system now being planned.

The third set of documents that you can find are state and local regional emergency planning documents. A large set of Virginia Department of Emergency Services documents can be found, for example, in the library. In these volumes you can learn how the state plans to react to emergencies and what resources are available.

If you like monitoring the Fairfax County Police Department visit the Fairfax City or Tyson's-Pimmit libraries and look at the Fairfax Police Standard Operating Procedures manual. (The SOP is also available at other of the larger regional libraries). It is full of information about the communications systems, jurisdictions, special unit operations, and the organizational charts.

If you like maps then visit the Fairfax County Government Center publication sales office. There you can purchase almost any kind of local or state map. I f you are a fire buff you can obtain the fire and rescue map. This map has all of the divisional, battalion, and box areas plotted for your wall. The price is around $3.

Here is a summary of what I found around the region and some other resources for you to try:

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Fairfax City (Virginia Room) and Tyson's Libraries
* State and Local Budgets
* State and Local CIP documents
* Fairfax County SOP Manual
* Fire and Rescue Annual Reviews

Tyson's Pimmit Regional Library
* Technology use review documents

George Mason University - Fenwick Library
* State agency operations manuals
* State Budget documents

Fairfax County Publication Sales
* Maps
* Budget Documents
* CIP documents
* Bid proposals and purchasing opportunities
* Fairfax County Office of Information Technology BBS (703-802-3270) 14.4 baud 8N1

Montgomery County
* 1994 DFRS annual review of service (Kensington Library)

Prince George's County
* EOC and Disaster Management Operations Handbook (Hyattsville Branch Library)

Another useful source is the Metropolitan Washington Council or Governments (COG). COG prepares and distributes several newsletters, public safety reports

and copies of disaster plans and mutual aid agreements. Call 202-962-3256 and ask for a publication list.

Readers are invited to share their comments and information gained by using some of these secret weapons. I can be contacted on the Frequency Forum BBS or at BNN14@aol.com. Remember to use all available library resources to find these items. You never know if you will stumble across more information that you will need!

"NEW" FREQUENCY FOR OLD SOLDIERS HOME

By Willard Hardman

It has recently been "discovered" that the King Medical Clinic and the "public works" at the old soldiers' home (officially the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home) at North Capitol and Irving Str., are using a repeater on 148.7 with a CTCSS of 156.7. We have yet to "discover" the input.
148.7 has a long history in the DC area. It was used (with CTCSS 156.7) by the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee as an escort net during the 1993 Presidential Inauguration. It was also used on a local basis (simplex, CSQ) by the Army Corps of Engineers during the clean up of the old ammunition dump discovered in Georgetown. Its current use appears to be permanent -- especially when you consider that a repeater has also been established on 148.8 [118.8] (input is 149.65) for security at the facility. The medical frequency, 173.4125, appears to be no longer in use.

The Soldiers' and Airmens' Home was founded in 1851 and provides a home for former enlisted members of the Army and Air Force. It is supported by donations from individuals in the Army and Navy and **receives no taxpayer funds.** The facility includes basic amenities (golf course, bank, post office, gym, craft shop, etc.), as well as the King Health Care Clinic, a 385-bed long-term care facility.

FOR SALE

Interested in purchasing a brand-new never-out-of-the-box 50-channel Bearcat 700A for $125? If so, contact Ralph Johnson at 301-540-3882. Ralph says he paid $150 for the radio and it includes 800 MHz coverage.

"NO SUCH AGENCY" ARTICLES IN BALTIMORE SUN.

By Bill Pasha

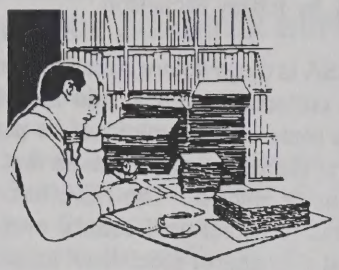
In December, the *Baltimore Sun* ran a series of six articles about Maryland's largest employer -- the National Security Agency (NSA) at Fort Meade. The articles provide an interesting insight for the layman into one of the most secret agencies in the nation, and are well worth reading. (Until 20 or so years ago, even the name of the agency was classified, thus the nick-name and play on its initials - No Such Agency). The definitive story of the agency, albeit somewhat dated (1982), remains *The Puzzle Palace* by James Bamford (available as a Penguin Book). An update can be found in *The U.S. Intelligence Community*, 3rd Edition (1995), by Jeffrey Richelson.

The NSA is the *primiere* American intelligence collection agency, and the article details some of the exploits of its personnel over the years - at least those that have been made public. The NSA has what amounts to operational control over substantial elements of specialized units of all branches of the military and naval services. It is they who do much of the actual communications interceptions and pass the information to NSA headquarters at Fort Meade.

In a sense, the NSA is the world's largest scanner club. One of the major missions of the agency is to "eavesdrop" (scan, if you will), radio communications of all kinds throughout the world. It is an element of the Department of Defense, although it provides support throughout the government to those agencies engaged in intelligence and security. It is also engaged in the protection of U.S. communications, as well as cryptographic operations, among other missions.

As pointed out in the articles, the NSA spreads its scanning net worldwide to intercept foreign communications that may impact on American national security. Interestingly, the technological advances such as DES, etc., that frustrate us in the scanning hobby, are the same (although somewhat even more sophisticated) that are frustrating some of the NSA's operations. Unlike a hobbyist, however, its purpose is substantially more serious in nature. Also unlike a hobbyist, it gets to spend something on the order of $1 million an hour, and employs more than 20,000 people in Maryland alone (at least according to the *Baltimore Sun* article).

The reprints are well worthwhile for those interested in the absolute penultimate of "scanning" -- or in how some of your tax dollars are being spent. Reprints of the NSA series are available for $3.95 from SunSource. Call 410-332-6800 for details.



NEWSSCAN

by Brent Baker

SOME JOURNALISTS STILL MONITOR SCANNERS. A Jan. 19 *official Kremlin international news broadcast* carried a press conference with spokesmen of the RF (Russian Fedration) Union of Journalists and the Glasnost Defense Fund regarding the hostage ordeal in Pervomaiskoye. One of the spokesmen, Valery Yakov, was asked how he knew the hostages were being shot since he did not witness any shootings.

I can tell you this, Yakov replied, "we had a scanner, with the help of which we listened in. You know, over those days we identified a number of radio frequencies, including those used by Raduyev, at least two of them, those of the interior troops, and the Federal Security Service. Although the communications of the latter were hard to decipher... we listened in to a number of those communications and were aware of what was happening around the village."

ONE MORE TIME! Just when you thought you read the last of the "look who's listening to your phone calls" articles, a 2010-word essay, written by freelance reporter Mark Ehrman, appeared in the Jan. 5 *Los Angeles Times*. The headline? SNOOP CITY; WITH THE FLICK OF A SWITCH, YOUR PHONE CALL IS NO LONGER PRIVATE. DRUG DEALS, WILD SEX -- THE SECRETS OF RAW LIFE. IT'S ALL PART OF THE NEW WORLD OF REALITY ENTERTAINMENT. The article starts with a 30-year-old L.A.-based musician, identified only as John, who surfs the cellular band for excitement.

"The scanner hit the public eye in 1993," Ehrman explains, "when a slew of tabloids and magazines published the racy transcripts of a mobile phone conversation between Prince Charles and his married mistress, Camilla Parker Bowles, that was picked up on a scanner and recorded. The tapes had hecklers chortling over such unprincely declarations as Charles' now famous desire to be reincarnated as Camilla's tampon."

In additional to sensational aspects of cellular listening, Ehrman tackles some legal and privacy issues with input from Bob Grove. "Grove estimates," Ehrman wrote, "that there are 10 million to 15 million scanner owners in the United States, and of those, 'fewer than 10 percent listen to cellular.' Many of them, Grove believes, are 'shut-ins with limited avenues of entertainment.'"

A new twist to the cellular saga involves commercial distribution of recorded cellular conversations. "'It hasn't been prepackaged for you. It's like a total dose of reality,' says 'Brother Russell,' the *nom de plume* of the creator of 'Austin Cellular Calls,' a collection of cellular calls taped in Austin, Texas. The conversations were all taped with simple recording equipment between midnight and 3 a.m., a time Russell believes yields the best material. Some of the horrific real dialogue on Russell's tapes comes from a conference call between some employees at a mental institution who admit to roughing up patients and then writing on their charts that the injuries had been caused by accidents."

"'It's real interesting to listen to the stream of information, and, based on what you decide to save on tape and what you edit down, it can give you a weird view of humanity,' says the creator of another underground tape called 'Satanic Cell Call Tapes.' These recordings, made in Northern California, are mostly ugly or obscene exchanges between the sexes. While taping and reproducing this material is illegal, the relatively small, noncommercial distribution of tapes in the underground has not triggered enforcement."

"Cellular phone scanning reaches its artistic apogee in the work of British experimental music artist Robin Rimbaud, whose CDs are released under the name Scanner. Since 1992, Scanner has released numerous CDs that contain textured ambient music interspersed with cellular phone conversations." This commercial release is legal in England the article claimed.

"'The scanner device provides an anonymous window into reality, allowing you to cut and paste information to structure an alternative vernacular,' Rimbaud says. 'Whether it's eavesdropping on an illicit affair, a liaison with a prostitute, a drug deal or a simple discussion of 'What's for dinner?' all exist within an indiscriminate ocean of digital signals flying overhead, but not beyond our reach.' The Scanner manifesto, Rimbaud says, 'is to take tiny fragments from this debris, to try to make some sense of it.'"

BLEAK FUTURE FOR FCC FIELD OFFICES. According to an editorial written by Don Bishop in the November Mobile Radio Technology, FCC Chairman Reed Hundt expects cuts in the agency's staffing from 2,200 to 2,050. A difference of millions of dollars between the budget requested by the FCC and the budget likely to be granted by Congress is the reason.

Many reductions will come from the commission's network of field offices and monitoring stations. Will this step reduce FCC enforcement actions? "Maybe some," Bishop says, "but it might not be noticeable. The field offices leave many interference complaints unresolved. There may be little reason for business and industrial radio system users to expect

maryland fire & rescue frequencies

Fire Mutual Aid Radio System Channels
154.295s *FMARS 1*; Base-to-Base Notification
154.280s *FMARS 2*; On-Scene Tactical (Metro)
154.265s *FMARS 3*; Northern Virginia (NoVA)

Areawide Med Channels
463.000 *Med* 1
463.025 *Med* 2
463.050 *Med* 3
463.075 *Med* 4
463.100 *Med* 5
463.125 *Med* 6
463.150 *Med* 7
463.175 *Med* 8; Available Statewide
462.950 *Med* 9; Call 1 (EMRC)
462.975 *Med* 10; Call 2

Med Channel CTCSS Designators (used in Maryland):
Tone A/1 127.3 Hz
Tone B/2 146.2 Hz
Tone C/3 167.9 Hz
Tone D/4 192.8 Hz (DC)

Allegany County
33.78s CH1 Dispatch
33.68s CH2 Fireground
33.98s CH3 Emer Prep
33.60s CH4 Emer Prep
Med 7; Tone A

Anne Arundel County
154.01s CH1 Simulcasts Trunked Dispatch
154.34s CH2 Simulcasts Trunked Alternate
Trunked: 856.3625, 857.3625, 858.3625, 859.3625 and 860.3625
Trunked: 856.3875, 857.3875, 858.3875, 859.3875 and 860.3875
Trunked: 856.4125, 857.4125, 858.4125, 859.4125 and 860.4125
Conventional: 854.4125, 854.5875 and 854.7375
Meds 4, 8; Tone C

Baltimore County (118.8 Hz)
46.46s CH1 Simulcasts Trunked Dispatch
46.28s CH2 Simulcasts Trunked Alternate
Trunked: 856.2125, 857.2125, 858.2125, 859.2125 and 860.2125
Trunked: 856.4625, 857.4625, 858.4625, 859.4625 and 860.4625
Trunked: 856.7125, 857.7125, 858.7125, 859.7125 and 860.7125
Trunked: 856.9625, 857.9625, 858.9625, 859.9625 and 860.9625
Conventional: 852.9125, 853.0125, 853.2125, 853.4125, 853.5875, 853.8375, 854.0125 and 854.2125
Meds 4, 8; Tone C

Baltimore City (156.7 Hz)
154.310r CH1 Response
154.370r CH2 Fireground
154.385s CH3 Fireground
154.325s CH4 Admin
154.415s CH5 Dispatch
154.145r CH6 Medical
154.370s CH7 Talkaround
154.280s CH8 FMARS 2
154.295s CH9 FMARS 1
Meds 2, 3; Tone C

Calvert County (118.8 Hz)
33.82s CH1 Dispatch
33.60s CH2 Fireground
Med 3; Tone A

Caroline County
33.70s CH1 Dispatch
33.44s CH2 Fireground
Med 1; Tone A

Carroll County (CSQ)
33.94s CH1 Dispatch
33.92s CH2 Fireground
Meds 4, 8; Tone C

Cecil County (CSQ)
46.18s CH1 Dispatch
46.54s CH2 Fireground and Emer Prep
46.40s CH3 Fireground
Med 5; Tone B

Charles County (162.2 Hz)
46.420s CH1 Dispatch (from 158.775)
46.360s CH2 Fireground (old)
158.775s CH1 Dispatch
155.085s CH2 Fireground (primary)
158.865s CH3 Fireground
158.955s CH4 Fireground
154.280s CH5 FMARS 2
Med 8; Tone C

Dorchester County
46.06s CH1 Simulcasts Trunked Dispatch
46.40s CH2 Fireground (old)
Trunked: 855.9875, 856.2625, 857.2625, 858.2625 and 859.2625
Med 5; Tone C

Frederick County (CSQ)
46.42s CH1 Fireground (primary)
46.34s CH2 Dispatch
46.24s CH3 Fireground
46.44s CH4 Fireground
Med 6; Tone B

Garrett County
33.88s CH1 Dispatch
33.96s CH2 Fireground
37.90s Hospital
Med 3; Tone B

Harford County (136.5 Hz)
33.740s CH1 Dispatch (from 460.6)
33.760s CH2 Fireground (old)
460.600r CH1 Dispatch
460.575r CH2 Fireground
460.625r CH3 Fireground
460.600s CH4 Talkaround
460.575s CH5 Talkaround
460.625s CH6 Talkaround
Meds 4, 8; Tone C

Howard County (103.5 Hz)
154.250r CH1 Dispatch
154.220s CH2 Fireground
154.175s CH3 Fireground
154.280s CH4 FMARS 2
155.820r CH5 Government 3
155.115r CH6 Coordination
Meds 4, 8; Tone C

Kent County (CSQ/152)
33.980s CH1 Dispatch
33.840s CH2 Fireground
153.950s CH1 Mobile Extender
153.950s CH2 Talkaround
153.770s CH3 Portable to Portable
154.280s CH4 FMARS 2
154.265s CH5 FMARS 3
153.890s CH6 Portable to Portable
154.010s CH7 Portable to Portable
154.070s CH8 Portable to Portable
Note, the county hopes to build a 150 MHz repeater system using the channels listed above.
Med 6; Tone C

Montgomery County (156.7 Hz)
153.950s CH 1 Fireground
154.160r CH 2 Dispatch
155.520s CH 3 Admin
155.100s CH 4 Local Govt 1
155.340s CH 5 Medical
154.160s CH 6 Talkaround
153.950r CH 7 Metro Tunnel
155.985s CH 8 Local Govt 2
154.280s CH 9 FMARS2
153.950r CH10 Potomac River
154.250r CH11 Howard County Fire (CH1)
154.220s CH12 Howard County Fire (CH2)
154.190r CH13 DC Fire (CH1)
154.235s CH14 DC Fire (CH2)
154.205s CH15 DC Fire (CH4)
154.265s CH16 FMARS 3
Meds 2, 5; Tone A

Ocean City (CSQ)
46.380s CH1 Worcester County
46.320s CH2 Medical (old)
46.360s CH3 Simulcasts Trunked Dispatch
46.400s CH4 Berlin FD
154.025s Simulcasts Trunked Dispatch
Trunked: 853.9625, 855.2375, 856.7375, 857.7375, 858.7375, 859.7375, 859.9875, 860.7375 and 860.9875
Conventional: 866.0125
Med 4; Tone A

Prince George's County (127.3 Hz)
46.1200s Station Alerting
495.0125r CH1 Medical
494.8375r CH2 Dispatch (north)
494.7875r CH3 Fireground (south)
495.0625r CH4 Fireground (north)
494.7875s CH5 Talkaround
495.0625s CH6 Talkaround
494.6625r CH7 Dispatch (south)
Meds 1, 7; Tone B

Queen Anne's County (CSQ)
46.14s CH1 Dispatch
46.08s CH2 Fireground
Meds 6/1; Tones C/A

Saint Mary's County (CSQ)
33.72s CH1 Fireground
33.94s CH2 Dispatch
33.08s CH3 Medical
33.10s CH4 Medical (primary)
33.82s CH5 Calvert County (CH1)
33.60s CH6 Calvert County (CH2)
Med 4; Tone B

Salisbury (DCS 025)
155.895r CH1 Dispatch
153.875s CH2 Fireground
155.925r CH3 Tactical
154.280s CH4 FMARS 2
154.385r CH5 Repeats 33.98
Med 2; Tone B

Somerset County
46.18s CH1 Dispatch
46.24s CH2 Fireground and Emer Prep
Med 4; Tone A

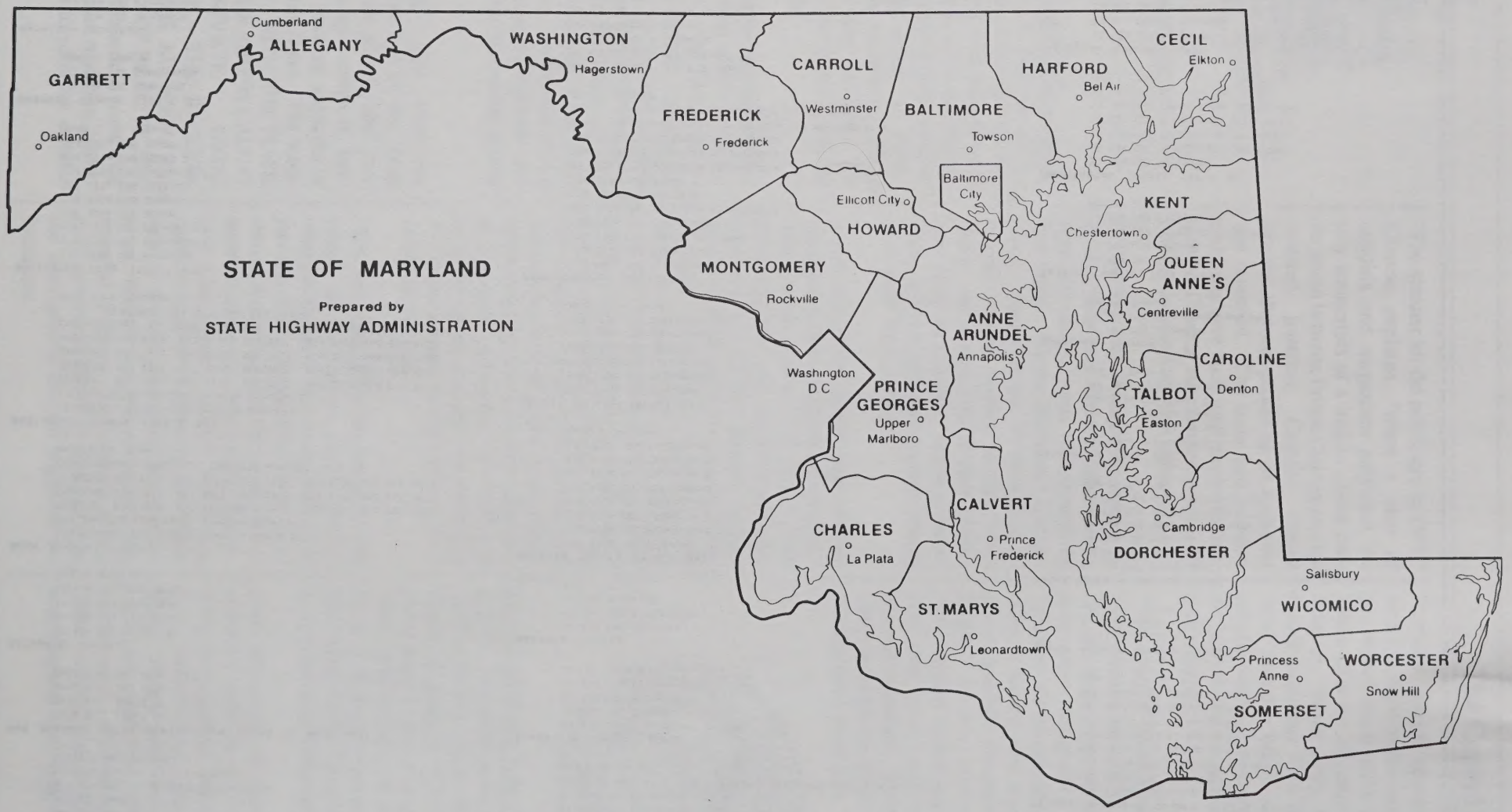
Talbot County (118.8 Hz)
33.90s CH1 Dispatch
33.64s CH2 Medical
33.68s CH3 Fireground (primary)
33.66s CH4 Fireground
Med 1; Tone A

Washington County (77.0 Hz)
33.86s CH1 Dispatch
33.84s CH2 Fireground (secondary)
33.80s CH3 Fireground (primary)
33.82s CH4 Fireground (tertiary)
33.08s CH5 FMARS (west panhandle)
33.16s CH6 Fire Police
Med 1; Tone C

Wicomico County (CSQ)
33.98s CH1 Dispatch
33.80s CH2 Fireground
33.48s CH3 Fire Police
Proposed UHF System: 453.075, 453.1, 453.125, 453.175, 453.45, 453.6, 453.7, 453.8 and 460.525.
Med 2; Tone B

Worcester County (CSQ)
46.38s CH1 Dispatch
46.44s CH2 Fireground
46.36s CH3 Ocean City
Med 4; Tone A

CONTRIBUTORS: Chip Campbell, Steve Finch, Earl Suitor, Todd Sunderland and Bill Zittle.


GARRETT
Oakland
ALLEGANY
Cumberland
WASHINGTON
Hagerstown
FREDERICK
Frederick
CARROLL
Westminster
BALTIMORE
Towson
Baltimore City
HARFORD
Bel Air
CECIL
Elkton
KENT
Chestertown
QUEEN ANNE'S
Centreville
CAROLINE
Denton
TALBOT
Easton
DORCHESTER
Cambridge
Salisbury
WICOMICO
WORCESTER
Snow Hill
SOMERSET
Princess Anne
Ellicott City
HOWARD
MONTGOMERY
Rockville
ANNE ARUNDEL
Annapolis
Washington D C
PRINCE GEORGES
Upper Marlboro
CALVERT
Prince Frederick
CHARLES
La Plata
ST. MARYS
Leonardtown
STATE OF MARYLAND
Prepared by
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

any less service. Losing a field office may mean just one less place to dial for a busy signal."

The FCC, Bishop said, may eventually call on the private sector for interference resolution. Complaints would be referred to commercial service companies, who would presumably charge for service. Later this year, technological advances will allow the FCC to operate all field offices by remote control from the Columbia, Maryland facility -- thus eliminating most of the eight to 10 employees required per field office.

Bishop states that the FCC's priorities for resolving interference complaints are: 1) presidential and White House communications; 2) immediate threat to safety of life and property; 3) public safety communications; 4) all others, for which there is little time. The FCC, Bishop said, "has announced its intention to stop enforcing CB rules altogether. Presto: no-o-o problem!"

Bishop quoted Hundt as saying that the FCC is "the biggest cash cow in the history of government. To date, it has returned over $9 billion to the Treasury and the U.S. taxpayer as a result of the auctions of radio spectrum which it has conducted in record speed and to universal acclaim. This is almost 50 times the total FCC appropriation for fiscal year 1995. The Senate subcommittee would kill this cash cow, even while we're trying to milk it for billions of more dollars in auction revenue."

J.B. HUNT AND SEARS ROEBUCK GO WIRELESS. While driving through a remote area of Canada, a J.B. Hunt truck driver suffered a heart attack. Struggling to remain conscious, the driver hit an emergency button on his wireless onboard computer. Within seconds his employer, J.B. Hunt Transport, faxed a map of the area in which the driver was stranded to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The Mounties responded minutes later and ultimately saved the driver's life.

Now, reports the Jan. 2 Financial World, the company's 8,300 vehicles are all outfitted with these wireless onboard computers, dubbed RoadRiders, which have handled emergencies and located stolen trucks. J.B. Hunt drivers send and receive data on shipment status and driving routes that minimize fuel costs and time. The system also transmits signatures for shipping forms electronically and relays engine information, reducing breakdowns. Hunt's RoadRiders are rugged battery-powered IBM PS/2 personal computers plugged into headquarters via satellite and land links.

Sears Roebuck is out-fitting its 13,500 field service technicians with notebook computers that have both wireless and wireline capabilities, manufactured by Itronix Corp. The rugged, portable machines facilitate same-day service to customers, automatically calculating service costs and even print bills. Using this system, which eventually will handle all of the company's 18 million service calls per year, dispatchers' loads are expected to be slashed by 75 percent while productivity improvements are targeted at 12 percent, according to the Yankee Group, a Boston consulting firm.

Sears is also installing wireless in its 800 full-line department stores. Early this year, the retailer will install radio frequency networks linking mobile point-of-sale devices, including hand-held registers and portable printers. The network will enable personnel to handle on-the-spot sales, check stock from any part of the store, and complete inventory and replenishment tasks while remaining visible to customers.

Of the 2.1 million mobile data users, 33 percent use cellular, 8 percent hook up via satellite, and 5 percent plug in through specialized data networks run by Motorola's Ardis or Ram Mobile Data USA, a BellSouth affiliate. J.B. Hunt is experimenting with "multimode" technology that first seeks to link up through Ardis, and only as a last resort hooks up with the more costly Rockwell or Qualcom satellite systems. Norfolk-based Virginia Natural 11 Gas uses software that performs a similar function, selecting automatically between various mobile data network delivery technologies. Mobile data networks are expected to expand almost fivefold by 2000, according to the Yankee Group.

Please address all correspondence to Alan. We encourage readers to submit material and to write articles which relate to the hobby. All submissions are subject to editing for both style and content. When submitting material please make certain we have your phone number should we have any questions. We welcome frequency and visitor requests, but please include a SASE.

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Frequency Forum Computer Bulletin Board:
We encourage computer users to log onto Jack Anderson's Frequency Forum computer BBS at 703-207-9622 (8-N-1). Frequency Forum is the official electronic gathering place for readers of the Capitol Hill Monitor!

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